

IN THE CLAIMS.

What is claimed is:

- 1    1. A method, comprising the steps of:
  - 2               forming a first layer over a first and second side of a substrate;
  - 3               removing at least a portion of the first layer formed over the second
  - 4               side of the substrate; and
  - 5               forming device features on the first side of the substrate.

- 1    2. The method of claim 1, wherein:
  - 2               forming the first layer comprises depositing a layer of silicon nitride.

- 1    3. The method of claim 2, wherein:
  - 2               removing at least a portion of the first layer formed over the second
  - 3               side of the substrate includes wet chemically etching with phosphoric acid.

- 1    4. The method of claim 2, wherein:
  - 2               the layer of silicon nitride has a thickness of less than 3,000 Å.

- 1    5. The method of claim 1, wherein:
  - 2               removing at least a portion of the first layer formed over the second side of the
  - 3               substrate includes isotropically etching.

- 1    6.    The method of claim 1, wherein:
- 2                 forming device features includes polishing a dielectric layer.
- 1    7.    The method of claim 6, wherein:
- 2                 polishing the dielectric layer includes chemical-mechanical polishing a
- 3                 shallow trench dielectric layer.
- 1    8.    The method of claim 1, further including:
- 2                 removing at least a portion of the first layer formed over the first side
- 3                 of the substrate.
- 1    9.    The method of claim 8, wherein:
- 2                 removing at least a portion of the first layer formed over the first side
- 3                 of the substrate includes forming a shallow trench isolation etch mask.
- 1    10.   The method of claim 1, further including:
- 2                 forming a second layer over the first side of the substrate; and
- 3                 removing at least a portion of the first layer formed over the second
- 4                 side of the substrate includes etching with a high degree of selectivity between
- 5                 the first layer and the second layer.

- 1    11. The method of claim 10, wherein:
- 2                 the second layer comprises silicon dioxide; and
- 3                 the first layer comprises silicon nitride.

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1   **12.**   A method, comprising the steps of:  
2                 forming a first layer that includes a first part formed over a first  
3                 substrate side and a second part formed over a second substrate side;  
4                 forming a second layer over the first part;  
5                 removing at least a portion of the second part; and  
6                 forming features on the first substrate side.

1   **13.**   The method of claim 12, further including:  
2                 patterning the first part before forming the second layer.

1   **14.**   The method of claim 12, wherein:  
2                 removing at least a portion of the second part includes etching  
3                 essentially all of the second part.

1   **15.**   The method of claim 14, further including:  
2                 the second layer serves as an etch mask to prevent etching of the first  
3                 part.

14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28

1   **16.**   A shallow trench isolation (STI) method, comprising the steps of:  
2                 forming a trench etch mask layer over a first and second substrate side;  
3                 and  
4                 removing at least a portion of the trench etch mask layer that is formed  
5                 over the second substrate side.

1   **17.**   The STI method of claim 16, wherein:  
2                 forming a trench etch mask includes depositing a layer silicon nitride  
3                 over the first and second substrate sides.

1   **18.**   The STI method of claim 16, further including:  
2                  patterning the trench etch mask layer formed over the first substrate  
3                 side and forming a trench dielectric over the first substrate side.

1   **19.**   The STI method of claim 18, further including:  
2                 etching a substrate to form trenches with the patterned trench etch  
3                 mask layer as an etch mask.

1   **20.**   The STI method of claim 18, further including:  
2                 chemical-mechanical polishing the trench dielectric.